

INTRODUCTION:

Claims 1-20 are pending and under consideration. Claims 2-5, 7-14, 17, 18 and 20 are objected to.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102 (Wetchler):

Independent claim 1 recites “comparing the residual amount of each of the color inks with a predetermined standard residual amount.” Thus, there is a comparison of amounts.

The Examiner relies upon column 7, lines 7-9 of the reference as disclosing this feature. However, this portion discloses the imbalanced condition is a condition where ink usage deviates sufficiently from a predetermined or nominal “use rate.” Thus, the relevant factor is a rate, not an amount.

Independent claim 1 further recites “if the residual amount of the at least one color ink is less than the predetermined standard residual amount, selecting one of a normal printing mode . . . and an ink saving printing mode.” Thus, the normal printing mode may be selected if the residual amount is less than the predetermined amount.

The Examiner relies upon column 8, lines 55-67 of the reference as disclosing this feature. However, this portion discloses that ink usage can be determined a variety of ways (lines 55-59). This portion also discloses that if the colorant imbalance exceeds a threshold amount, an adjustment is made (lines 60-67). However, there is no disclosure that a normal printing mode may be selected. In fact, there is no disclosure of any selection. Furthermore, this portion refers to a “colorant imbalance” as the determining factor. This implies that amounts of multiple colors are compared with each other. However, claim 1 recites comparing a residual amount of a color with a standard amount for that color.

The Examiner also relies upon column 9, lines 31-41 of the reference as disclosing this feature. However, this portion discloses a balancing of colorants. No selection of a normal mode is disclosed.

Independent claim 15 recites “comparing the residual amount of each of the color inks with a predetermined standard residual amount; determining whether the residual amount of at least one of the color inks is less than the predetermined standard residual amount.” Accordingly, claim 15 is patentably distinguishable from the cited reference for at least the above

reasons as set forth with respect to claim 1.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103 (Wetchler and Yamamoto):

The above comments with respect to Wetchler apply here. Yamamoto does not overcome the above deficiencies in Wetchler.

CONCLUSION:

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

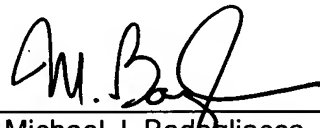
Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this response, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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